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28 March 1960 25X1

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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28 MARCH 1960

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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[redacted] says nothing will happen on Berlin at summit; also that USSR "will pull troops out of East Europe in near future."

II. ASIA-AFRICA

South Africa--Strike set for today will provide new test of Africans' organizational strength.

Iraq--Qasim's commutation of death sentences for leaders of royal regime likely to provoke strong Communist protests.

Indonesia--Newly organized conservative group protests Sukarno's plan for new parliament.

Morocco--Leftist elements demonstrate strength in successful one-day general strike.

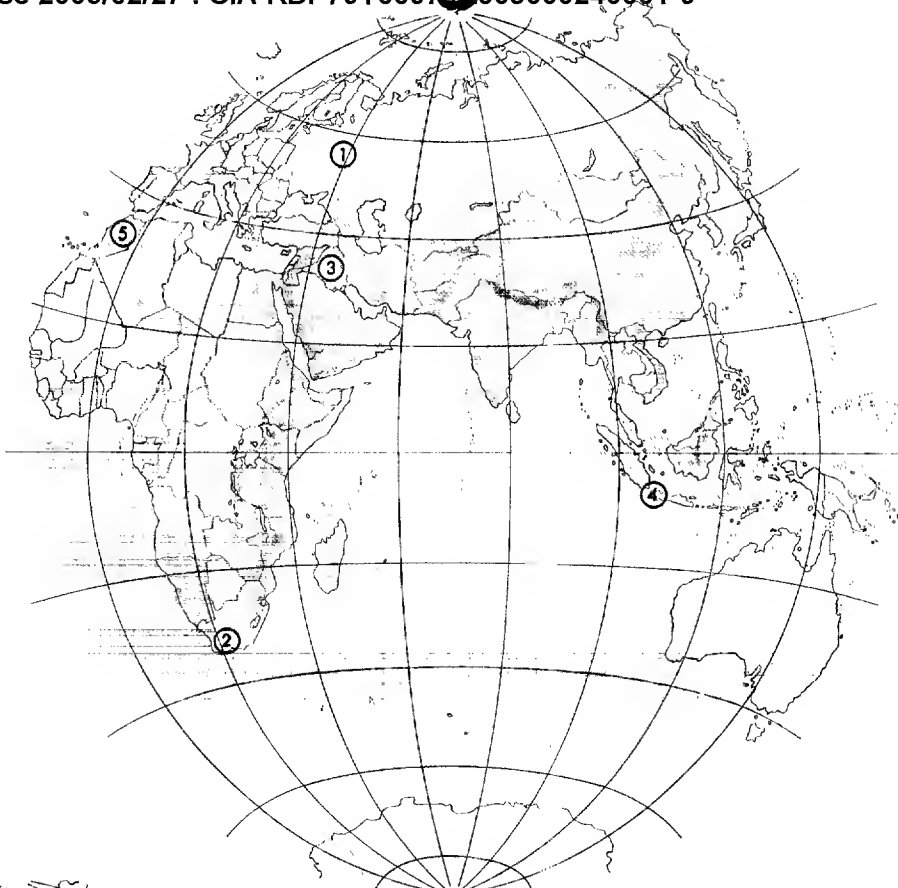
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28 March 1960

DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] "nothing will happen with respect to Berlin at the summit," and that the Soviet Union "after this" will sign a peace treaty with East Germany. This remark is in line with previous statements by Soviet spokesmen, including Khrushchev, designed to maintain Soviet pressure on this issue while carefully avoiding the implication of a specific time limit. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] also said that "in the near future" the USSR "will pull troops out of Eastern Europe," following which "the Germans" will exert enough pressure on the United States to force it to leave West Germany. [REDACTED] in this case, was probably echoing Khrushchev's statement to West German Ambassador Kroll last January that the USSR was planning a reduction of Soviet troops in Eastern Europe "proportionate" to the troop reduction within the Soviet Union. [REDACTED]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

South Africa: The government's decision, announced on 26 March, to suspend enforcement of regulations requiring Africans to carry identity passes may temporarily reduce tension. It will not, however, halt the Africans' campaign against apartheid. The stay-at-home strike called for 28 March by the country's major African political organization will provide the next test of the African leaders' strength and could lead to new violence. [REDACTED] Meanwhile, the Asian-African bloc at the UN, which requested the Security Council session now scheduled for 30 March, appears determined to press for a strong resolution which would condemn South Africa and establish some type of machinery to keep the situation under review. [REDACTED] (Page 1)

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Iraq: Premier Qasim, in a move likely to provoke strong Communist protests, ordered on 27 March that death sentences imposed on several key leaders of the former royal government be commuted to relatively short prison terms. The growing strength of anti-Communist elements in the government, in the army, and throughout the countryside has apparently reduced Qasim's scope for political balancing. The Communist-controlled press has already charged government officials with directing attacks against Communists and "democratic organizations," and it has demanded that Iraqi security forces give them greater protection. [redacted] 25X1

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Indonesia: The newly organized "Democratic League," made up of leaders from the Masjumi and small anti-Communist parties, on 24 March publicly protested against President Sukarno's plan to appoint a new parliament. This protest, which apparently has General Nasution's support, is aimed against the expansion of Communist influence in a new parliament. On 27 March, President Sukarno announced the breakdown of his proposed parliament which would give 30 of 130 party seats to the Communists. The Democratic League is the first united rightist effort against the President in recent years. Because the other large non-Communist parties are not participating, however, the league's effectiveness is likely to be limited unless the army supports it in open opposition to Sukarno.

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Morocco: A largely successful general strike staged on 25 March in Casablanca and Rabat by the powerful leftist-oriented Moroccan Labor Union (UMT) was essentially a political action. The UMT is the nucleus of the National Union of Popular Forces and the principal source of political support for both Prime Minister Ibrahim and Deputy Prime Minister Bouabid. Its one-day strike served notice on the crown prince and other rightist elements--who for several months have been waging a campaign to eliminate the left as a political force--that the UMT retains its mass following and is prepared to resist further encroachments from the right. [redacted]

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DAILY BRIEF

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

The South African Situation

Tension in South Africa may be eased temporarily by the government's decision, announced on 26 March, to suspend enforcement of regulations requiring Africans to carry identity passes at all times. Developed over a century ago, the pass system has long been a major cause for native resentment and was the immediate target of the demonstrations last week which resulted in some 80 Africans being killed by security forces. The government's move followed a sharp increase of politically motivated absenteeism during the past few days among essential African workers in several cities.

Prime Minister Verwoerd's apparent determination to outlaw all African political organizations--a move which the American Embassy in Cape Town believes would demolish virtually the last bridges between whites and blacks in South Africa--may lessen even the immediate effects of his unprecedented concession. Moreover, militant members of such groups, who can be expected to continue their activities underground, will probably be encouraged by the regime's retreat in the face of pressure. The African National Congress--the country's largest nonwhite political organization--has called for a "day of mourning" on 28 March for last week's dead. Africans have been instructed to stay home and avoid violence; nevertheless, new clashes with the police may materialize.

[The Asian-African group at the UN, which requested the special Security Council session now scheduled for 30 March, has been described by Ambassador Lodge as being "in an angry mood." There appears to be widespread sentiment within the group for a strong resolution which would condemn the South African Government and establish some type of machinery through which it might be kept under continuing fire. Some African representatives may press for still more drastic action, such as a recommendation that UN members apply diplomatic and economic sanctions against South Africa.]

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The Iraqi Situation

Internal tensions remain high in Iraq, and a showdown between the Qasim regime and the orthodox Iraqi Communists appears to be approaching. The strength of anti-Communist elements has grown in the government, in the army, and throughout the countryside. Communist leaders, with their firm control on peasants' organizations already broken, are struggling to defend their hold on labor unions.

The Communist-controlled press has charged the government with directing attacks against Communists and "democratic organizations" and has demanded that they be given greater protection by Iraqi security forces. [The Communists have been taking something of a beating in recent street clashes with anti-Communist enthusiasts in several Iraqi cities. Last week, leaders of the National Democratic party, which retains strong influence within the government, reportedly proposed to key Baath and Istiqlal leaders that they join in an anti-Communist national front.]

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In a dramatic move likely to provoke strong Communist protests, Qasim on 27 March ordered that the death sentences imposed on several key officials of the former royal regime--such as former Premier al-Jamali and General Daghistani--be commuted to relatively short prison terms. It is still not clear, however, whether Qasim himself is masterminding the successive measures to undermine Communist influence or simply riding the swell of anti-Communist strength. In either case, he appears to have much less scope than before for shifting the political balance without increasing the danger of a new attempt to assassinate or overthrow him. This risk is already substantial, in view of continued plotting by several groups and in view of Qasim's occasional inclination to move about Baghdad without a guard.

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[REDACTED]

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Indonesian Conservatives Protest Sukarno's Plan
To Reorganize Parliament

The Democratic League, hastily organized at army instigation on 16 March, has issued a public protest signed by 15 leaders against Indonesian President Sukarno's plan to appoint a new parliament to replace the body he dissolved on 5 March. The signatories represent the Masjumi--which with 57 members was one of the two largest parties in the former parliament--plus the Indonesian Socialist party (PSI) and four other minority parties. They assert that Sukarno's plan will reduce parliament's independence from the President, violate democratic rights guaranteed in the constitution, and "result in tensions in the society." The reported minimum goal of the league is to block--or at least postpone--the establishment of the new parliament and the resultant increase of Communist influence. Its maximum objective would be an army take over.

Following the league's protest, President Sukarno on 27 March announced the names for the new parliament, which is expected to take office following his departure on 1 April on a world tour. The 261-member body reportedly will have 130 representatives from political parties and 131 from functional groups in Indonesian society. Aside from the Masjumi, the major parties are to be represented roughly in proportion to their strength in the previous parliament. Sukarno named 44 representatives from the Indonesian National party, 36 from the Nahdatul Ulama, and 30 from the Communist party. No mention was made of either the Masjumi or the PSI.

The influence of the Democratic League will apparently depend largely on the support it receives from the army. It has been reported that the league is sponsored by General Nasution, and that his personal representative, Lieutenant Colonel Sukendro, called the first meeting and serves as the army liaison. League leaders claim that Nasution has told them, "I support the organ and policy fully and will guarantee you all from arrest." Because of the nonparticipation of the other large non-Communist parties, however, the league's effectiveness is likely to be limited unless the army supports it in open opposition to Sukarno. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
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Moroccan Leftists Demonstrate Strength

The largely successful general strike staged in Casablanca and Rabat on 25 March was the first effective counterattack by Moroccan leftists since rightist elements, including the crown prince and Istiqlal party leaders, launched an intensive campaign last fall to eliminate the left as a political force. The strike was called by the Moroccan Labor Union (UMT), which is the nucleus of the leftist political grouping--the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP)--and the principal source of political support for both Premier Ibrahim and Deputy Premier Bouabid.

The UMT's decision to act now, after having failed to invoke its potentially strong strike weapon to protest the long series of attacks focused generally on the UNFP, was prompted by the inauguration on 20 March of a rival labor federation. This new organization, largely the creation of a rightist Istiqlal leader, aspires to win over the 650,000 workers affiliated with the UMT.

Once the decision was made, the strike was boldly identified as an essentially political action. UMT pronouncements clearly indicated that the protest was directed not only at the new labor group, but at the entire "plot against popular organizations." At the same time, care was taken to keep the demonstration orderly and nonviolent in order to avoid giving the UMT's opponents, who have been resorting increasingly to police repression of leftist activities, a pretext for harsh retaliation.

Both Ibrahim and Bouabid publicly expressed support for the UMT during the strike--their first such pronouncements since the intensified campaign against the leftists began. The two leaders may have felt that such statements, which are likely to spur the rightists to new efforts to bring down the present government, were politically unavoidable once the UMT itself had become directly involved. The American Embassy in Rabat believes it is also possible their statements may reflect a belief that the cautious King may not be entirely satisfied with the rightists' campaign. [REDACTED]

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